

PROJECT ICARUS

Written by

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FADE IN

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - NIGHT

The smell of tobacco smoke is only undercut by the pungent scent of hot sweaty men. The sounds of laughter, shouting, and excitement fill the room. At the bar-counter, two frosty mugs are filled past full with cheap terrible tasting beer. The beers are then delivered to two sweaty half-naked men in the center of a ring of people. The smallest of the two men, JAMES (20's, tall, average build), sits on a chair at the edge of the circle of people. His friend, ERIC, rubs him on the shoulders like a coach would do for a boxer.

ERIC

Are you sure about this James?  
You're completely wasted.

JAMES

(sloppy Irish accent)  
It's alright Danny Boy. I've got  
the luck o' the Irish on my side.

ERIC

You're only Irish when you're  
drinking.

JAMES

(sloppy Irish accent)  
Aren't we all?

ERIC

You are the worst Irishman. Not  
even including the fact that you  
only seem able to talk in Irish  
cliches.

JAMES picks up the pint that had been delivered to him and drinks the whole thing.

ERIC (CONT'D)

If you lose your rent money, you're  
sleeping outside.

JAMES

(sloppy accent)  
Relax laddy...

ERIC

That's Scotland...

JAMES  
(sloppy accent)  
Look here lad, if I lost this,  
could I consider m'self a proper  
Irishman? I submit to you I could  
not.

ERIC  
James! You're not really Irish!

JAMES  
You're not really a man!

ERIC  
You're from Texas!

JAMES  
You're sexy.

Beat.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry about saying you're not a  
man. That was mean.

ERIC  
You are very drunk.

JAMES  
You keep saying that. I'm not drunk  
but I think some of these other  
guys might be.

A "referee" enters the ring and looks at the two shirtless  
gentlemen.

REFEREE  
Are you men ready? A reminder. No  
scratching or biting. Nothing below  
the belt. Have a good fight  
gentlemen.

JAMES stands and immediately collapses back into the chair.  
ERIC helps him back up.

ERIC  
That inspires confidence.

REFEREE  
Whenever you're ready men!

JAMES sways in place. JAMES runs in for the first shot,  
misses by a lot, and stumbles to the ground.

JAMES spring back up to his feet in time to see several blows which land near his face and chest. JAMES puts his hand up to block, looks for an opening, then delivers several body shots. The other man pushes JAMES back. JAMES comes back with a haymaker. The other man dodges and delivers several a few heavy punches to JAMES' face. JAMES stumbles back and dabs the fresh blood from his face. JAMES shakes his head to clear his mind and assumes a fighting stance in the center of the ring. This time it's serious business. The big man throws a few wild bunches. JAMES easily dodges them like a pro and throws two punishing body shots as a response, followed by a head shot. The big man throws wild heavy punch after wild heavy punch. JAMES dodges a few but the others land hard. JAMES sluggishly tries to get in more shots but he misses most and the others have no strength to them. The big man delivers the knock out punches and it's over.

The Bartender appears from the crowd.

BARTENDER

As agreed, here's your tab...

JAMES looks at the price.

JAMES

Holy shit!

The Bartender then points to the big man and his friend.

BARTENDER

...and, of course, *their* tab.

JAMES looks at their tab.

JAMES

Shit...

BARTENDER

How would you like to pay for that?

JAMES

Well, you see, here's the thing-

Before that thought is over JAMES and ERIC and bolting for the exit. The big man and his friend follow hot in pursuit. ERIC and JAMES explode out of the bar and into the night air. JAMES directs ERIC to go the other way and he does. JAMES takes off left.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAINY STREETS - CONTINUOUS

JAMES sprints through the rain soaked night, turning corners and hurdling over obstacles but still the beating footsteps and heavy breathing can be heard from close behind.

JAMES  
Oh, my God.

JAMES beats it around a corner and not long after the big man comes around after him.

MAN  
HEL--

JAMES stops at the sound of the distress call. He looks back and sees the big man storming toward him. JAMES takes off in the direction of the call, straight toward the big man. Just before JAMES is about to collide he pushes himself up with some invisible force and vaults over the big man. The man just blinks in bewilderment as JAMES races away.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

JAMES swerves around a corner to see a MUGGER pointing a gun at another man.

JAMES  
Hey! You put that gun down!

The MUGGER swings around and points the gun at JAMES.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Oh, shit!

JAMES dives behind the wall again.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
I did not think this through!

MUGGER  
What are you doing here?! Go away!

JAMES  
Look I'm just here to help that  
horribly distressed individual you  
were previously pointing the gun  
at.

JAMES steps out from behind the wall.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
For, you see, I am a hero of super--  
oh God...

Just that moment JAMES throws up on in the alley.

MUGGER  
What's wrong with you?

JAMES  
What do you mean? Mentally or  
physically? Because physically, I  
may have had one or two beers  
tonight. Mentally? A lot of things  
at this moment.

Beat.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Hold on, let me get my game face  
on.

JAMES shakes his head back and forth and slaps himself in the  
face a bit to wake up.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Alright, I'm good to go.

MUGGER  
Don't move any closer or I'll  
shoot!

JAMES just shoots him an "are you serious?" look, waves his  
hand, and the clip falls out of the gun. JAMES waves his hand  
again and the hammer on the pistol slides back and discharges  
the round that was in the chamber. JAMES holds his hand  
straight out and the gun is pulled right out of the MUGGER's  
hand and floats in mid-air. With a few hand movements the gun  
breaks apart, cleanly, piece-by-piece, until it's all on the  
ground. JAMES looks satisfied.

BIG MAN  
There you are!

JAMES' satisfaction melts. He whips around to see the BIG MAN  
standing a foot away from him. Quick foot steps can be heard  
behind him. It's the MUGGER trying to get the best of him.  
JAMES sucker punches the BIG MAN in the gut to incapacitate  
him. He then swivels around and puts his arms up as guards.  
The MUGGER throws a few punches but they all bounce off an  
unseen barrier. JAMES lowers his guard and dodges the next  
few punches. JAMES lands a few of his own with just enough  
time to pivot back toward the BIG MAN who is now fully  
recovered and is swinging as well.

JAMES dodges and punches hard, swings around, and lands a few cheap shots on the MUGGER. Finally, the MUGGER and the BIG MAN attack at once. JAMES stops both of their fists for a minute before pushing them both back with tremendous force.

JAMES turns his attention towards the MUGGER first. The MUGGER pulls himself from a pile of garbage. JAMES readjusts his stance. From a distance, JAMES picks up the MUGGER until he's hovering 10 feet above the ground.

JAMES

Now, listen to me! I'm giving you this one chance only! You're going to go home, take a long shower, and you're gonna rethink your life! And you're never going to break any law ever!

With that, JAMES hurls him back into the pile of garbage. The MUGGER quickly stands up and runs away, dropping the stolen wallet in the process. JAMES whips around, back to the BIG MAN.

JAMES (CONT'D)

And you! I don't have any money to give you! I'm sorry!

BIG MAN

Whatever! Keep it! Just let me go!

JAMES

You may leave.

The BIG MAN sprints away. JAMES turns to the victim.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Is there anything--

Before he can finish the sentence, the victim takes off without even grabbing this wallet.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Wait! You forgot... a lot of things. Not the least of which is a 'thank you'.

JAMES groans, massages his sore body, and walks away.

INT. APARTMENT - LATER

JAMES bursts in through the door, slams it shut and collapses, face-first, into the couch. A voice calls from a different room.

VICTORIA  
Who just came in?

JAMES mumbles into the couch. VICTORIA emerges from her room.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)  
Hey James. Where's Eric?

JAMES mumbles into the couch again.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)  
Where's your shirt?

JAMES turns his head to the side, lazily glances around the room, then shrugs. VICTORIA looks down a moment then stands up quickly.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)  
Well, you want some ice cream?

JAMES nods his head and VICTORIA goes to the freezer. She prepares a bowl of ice-cream then fills a plastic sandwich bag with ice-cubes. She places the bowl on the coffee table in front of JAMES then places the ice-bag to his bruises. VICTORIA observes the scrapes and bruises and sighs. Just then ERIC comes in through the front door. JAMES and VICTORIA both look up to see a beaten, bloody looking ERIC.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)  
Oh my God, Eric! What happened?!

JAMES  
Jesus! Are you alright?

ERIC just shakes his head through his tears and painfully limps to the bathroom without saying a word. VICTORIA follows him to the bathroom. She helps him remove his shirt and pants and treats his wounds.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - LATER

JAMES and ERIC sit with their backs to the opposite walls, facing each other. ERIC is covered in bandages and bruises. They both hang their heads low.

JAMES  
Eric, I'm really sorry.

ERIC shakes his head.



ERIC  
I don't blame you.

JAMES  
I plan to pay you back all the  
money they took from you.

ERIC  
You don't need to do that.

JAMES  
I need to do something.

ERIC  
I need you to stop blaming  
yourself.

JAMES  
I can't do that. I am so, so sorry  
and I need you-

ERIC  
James, just STOP!

A long silence follows.

ERIC (CONT'D)  
I'm gonna go to bed.

JAMES  
Alright, we'll talk about it  
tomorrow.

ERIC  
Whatever...

ERIC walk into his room. JAMES waits a minute then goes into  
his room.

INT. PROCESSING ROOM

The black hood gets whipped off of JAMES' head. JAMES looks  
around frantically. As far as he can tell, he's all alone.  
JAMES struggles with the cuffs binding his hands and feet.  
Suddenly, a man walks into the room, places a folder on the  
table, and examines JAMES for a moment.

Beat.

JAMES  
Where am I? What am I doing here?

EXAMINER

You seem like a pretty smart man  
Mr. Miller, and a man as smart as  
you would already know why your  
here.

JAMES sighs and hangs his head.

EXAMINER (CONT'D)

Your display last night was very  
impressive Mr. Miller.

The EXAMINER smiles and leans in.

EXAMINER (CONT'D)

How would you like to meet others  
like you?